



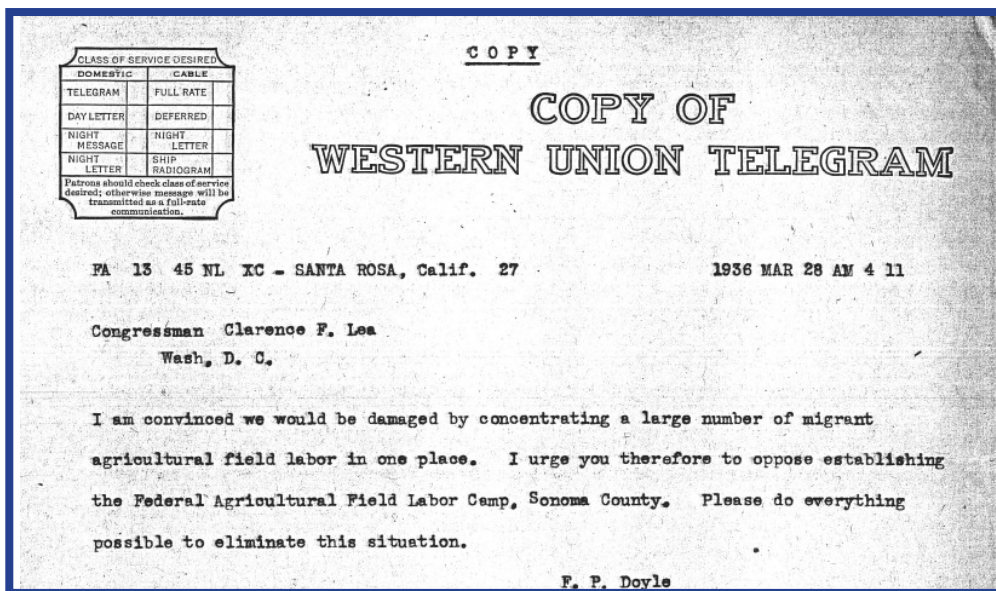
Windsor Migratory Labor Camp and the Caster Family

By Steve Lehmann,
A special thank s for the Caster family history as related by their son Drew

By 1936 the Federal government was planning to construct camps for migratory farm workers throughout California. While the government’s first camp near Marysville had proved to be successful the Healdsburg Tribune reported that, “One of the constant dangers in such camps is that they will become hotbeds of radicalism.” In December 1937 the Associated Farmers of Sonoma County protested the camp proposed for Windsor. It was not only the Associated Farmers that protested. Telegrams from many influential Sonoma County agricultural leaders were also sent to the local government representatives to urge the project be abandoned.

Letters and telegrams were sent by Ben Steele, Frei Brothers, E. C. Merritt on behalf of the North Coast Agricultural Committee, Mrs. L. L. Woodward, F. P. Doyle, L. M. Meredith among others. G. A. Proctor wrote,

“The proposed Federal camp definitely eliminates that control which is so necessary today in connection with any large concentration of transients and itinerants: even prohibiting the camp superintendent to be deputized. In view of the radical disturbances which have prevailed here and in other agricultural districts of California, there is



Telegram from F.P. Doyle March 1938 Frank Doyle was the president of the Exchange Bank and known as the “Father of the Golden Gate Bridge”.

unlimited ground for objection to camps of this type over which there is no control”

All of the concerns and pleadings were overruled and the camp was constructed on 60 acres of the Calhoun ranch, just west of Windsor on Windsor River Road.



Camp Windsor in 1940, photo by Virgil Caster

The Windsor Migratory Labor Camp was ready to be occupied by December 1938 and included a camp constitution with the following preamble

“We the people of the Windsor Migratory Labor Camp in order to form a more perfect neighborhood, promote the general welfare, insure domestic tranquility, do hereby establish this constitution for the Windsor Migratory Camp.”

The camp was designed for 210 families more or less. In the 1940 census there were only 39 families or 128 individuals counted. Many of these individuals stayed only a short time moving with the crops or finding permanent work and moving from the camp but staying in the area.

Continued on page 4

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Windsor Museum and Historical Society Board Members

Stephen Lehmann, President
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Cheryl Strong, Secretary

Marilou DelGreco, Treasurer

Vacant, Newsletter Editor

Don Arata

Ken DelGreco

Edna Honsa

Josephine Rebich

Hembree House Museum
9225 Foxwood Dr.
Windsor, California

THIS PROPERTY

THE CUNNINGHAM-HEMBREE ESTATE

HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE

**NATIONAL REGISTER
OF HISTORIC PLACES**

BY THE UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Mission Statement

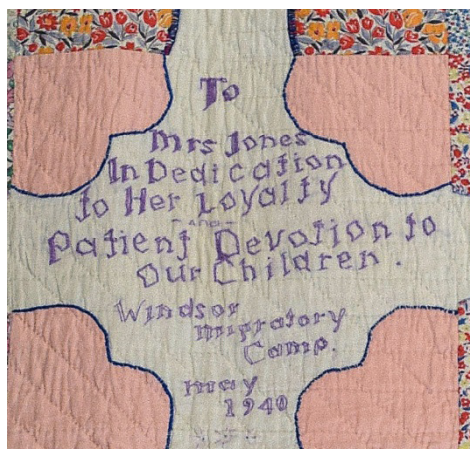
The mission of the Windsor Museum and Historical Society is to collect, preserve, and disseminate the history of Windsor and the Russian River Township through museum exhibits, historic sites, educational programs and printed materials.



We just finished our 10th annual Polenta Dinner fundraising event and thanks to so many people it was a great success, a

complete sell-out plus a few. Last year was chef Bill Strong's final year as cook and this year chef Randy Apel stepped in. He did great job and Bill Strong was able to sit down and enjoy Polenta with his wife and friends instead of stirring Polenta all night. It was a fun night for all.

Quilt Donation



The Museum received a very special donation last month. It is a quilt given to Alvia Makee Jones by parents from Camp Windsor, the Migratory Labor Camp built during the Roosevelt administration to alleviate the hardships of the people displaced by the dust bowl and depression.

Alvia Jones lived near Fulton with her husband Alvie and taught at the Camp school. The quilt is in wonderful condition and was donated by Alvia's son-in-law, Mac Marshall of Santa Rosa.

The parents embroidered their names as well as their children's names

on the quilt and some are familiar today. The Caster family, Leland, Virgil and Irene are on the quilt. Also on the quilt is Aubrey, Ruby, Eunetta the Troy Lee Winchester; Grace Costner is on the quilt, she was here with her husband Ray, daughter Marie and sons Cecil, Kenneth, Joe and Roy Jr. We are in the process of trying to track down the rest of the people named on the quilt as well as their photos. The entire list of names is included later in the newsletter. The quilt is currently on display at the museum.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Bob Crawford. Bob and his wife Donna have been long time members as well as long time Windsor residents. They were our neighbors out Windsor River Road before moving closer to town. Bob authored a few books and had an interest in British sports cars and I enjoyed talking to him about them. He also had a sense of humor that I really liked. Just to say hello and good morning to him made me smile anticipating an often hilarious response.

Phone Call from Hembree History

I had the pleasure and honor to receive a phone call from Diana Halderman the other day. Diana is married to Robert Halderman and Robert is the grandson of Clara and Dr. Atlas Hembree. The Haldermans live in southern California and have not visited the museum lately but she told me that when they were first married she came to meet Clara at the Hembree House. A very special conversation for me.

Still looking for HELP

We would love to have have some help with newsletter articles and or social media skills.

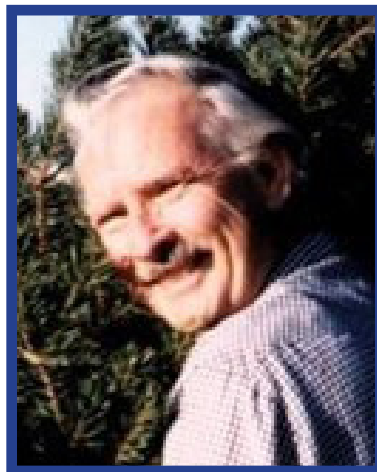
See you 'round the Museum

Long time member "Bob Crawford has passed away

Robert E. "Bob" Crawford

(from the Press Democrat)

December 17, 1929 - January 24, 2019
 Robert E. "Bob" Crawford, 89, passed away peacefully at home in Windsor surrounded by family and entered into Heaven on January 24, 2019. Bob was born to Charles and Leona Crawford on December 17, 1929 in Illinois. He served in the United States Air Force from 1948-1952 and attended Arizona State University earning a Bachelor's Degree in Geography.



Bob went on to graduate from Law School and joined the California Bar Association in 1978. He was an attorney for the cities of Healdsburg and Santa Rosa, and also represented the Windsor Water District and the Windsor Fire Department before retiring in 2000.

Bob was a long-time member of Kiwanis International and proud to be a founding member of Windsor Kiwanis. Bob was an avid reader and writer, he instilled the love of books in his children and grandchildren. His passion for reading was so strong, he picked up the pen and authored four books including, The Witches Three.

In addition to being a loving husband, father, grandfather and friend, he was a lawyer, rancher, author, city planner, artist, and veteran to name a few titles. Bob is loved, missed and survived by: his loving wife of almost 45 years, Donna M. Crawford, of Windsor; his children, Ammond (and his wife, Amanda) Crawford, and Sharon Satow; his grandchildren, Malachi and Hannah Crawford, and Samantha (and her husband, Luke) Boris, and Stephanie and Garrison Satow. He is also survived by his sister, Cheryl (and her husband, Kevin) Sweeney; Brenda Apyrl; and by many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Leona Crawford; his sister, Jackie Keeler; brother, Charles Crawford; and sister-in-law, Millie Crawford.



Welcome New Members

- Tina Beard
- Katie King
- Shirley Hightower

Donations

Monetary Donations

- Wynn & Heide Bailey
- Clara Brock & Arlene Rusche
- Frances Brooks
- John Lehmann & Gabriella Gazzano
- Craig & Elaine Curreri
- Steve & Glenda Castelli

Brick Campaign

- Daniel Munoz
- Ann Pitts

Museum Artifacts

- Mac Marshall on behalf of Marjory Jones Wolf
- Drew & Patricia Caster
- Rebich Family

Special Thanks to

- Gabriel Fraire
- Patricia Caster
- for their Technical Advice

In Memory of Bob Crawford

- Norm & Barbara Ray
- Steve & Jan Lehmann

Thank you!

Among the latter were the Caster's, Virgil, Irene and Leland. The Caster's had been to Camp Windsor at least



Irene Castor and Leland, Camp Windsor 1940

twice. The first time was in July of 1939, looking for work.

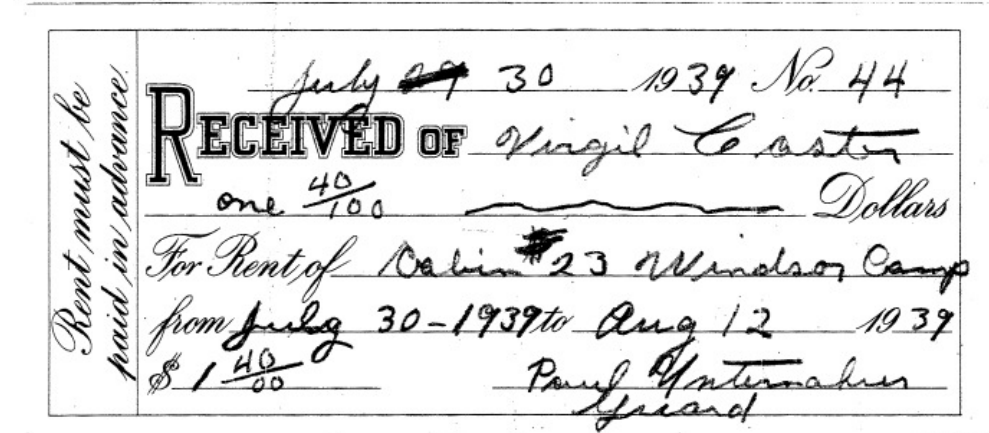
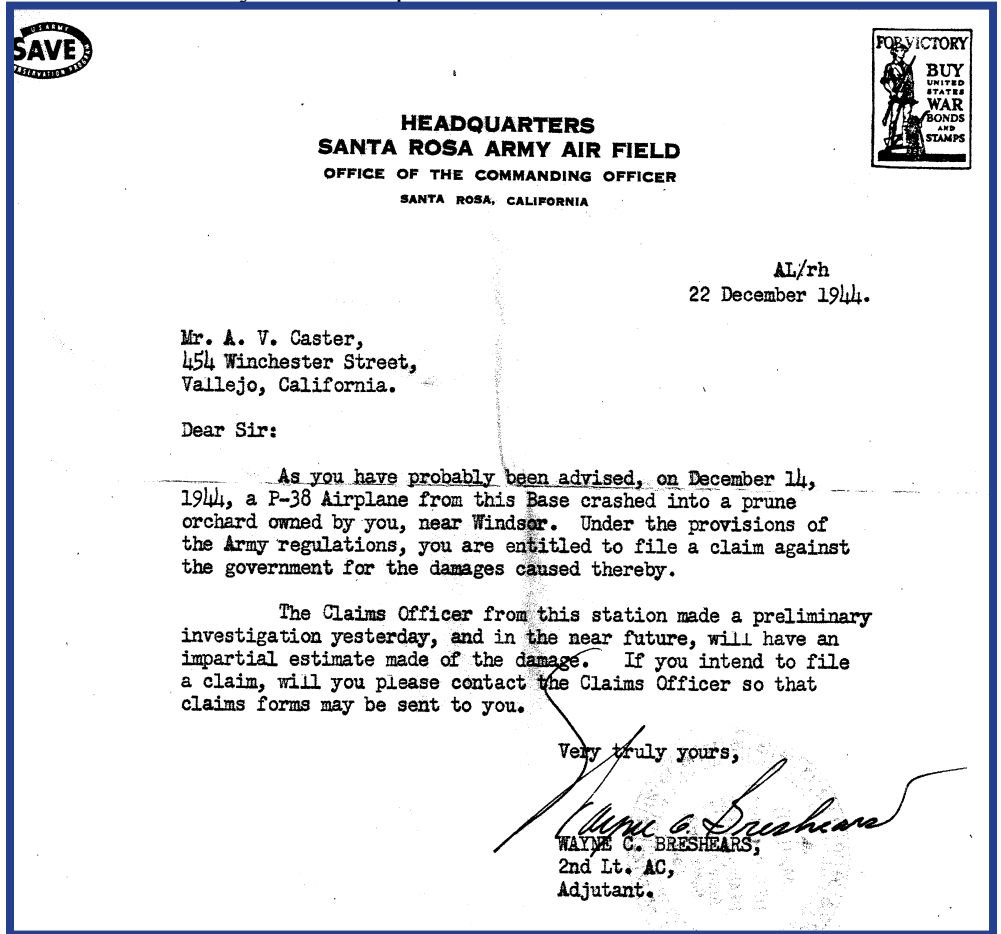
The second time was in 1940 and after a few months the family moved off the camp and onto a farm on Hembree lane where the family found work and the house rented for \$9.00 a month. After the Hembree road job Virgil worked three months as caretaker at Shiloh cemetery. Then it was to a chicken ranch in Cotati for a time. He even found work helping to dismantle Camp Windsor after it closed in late 1940 and the buildings and equipment were moved to another camp in the central valley.

Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese on December 7, 1941 and by December 22 Virgil secured work at the shipyard in Vallejo. At about the same time he purchased a small farm barely a quarter of a mile from Camp Windsor. They lived in Vallejo during the week in a rented house and came back to their farm each weekend

The Migrant Labor Camp closed in late 1940 and by 1944 Camp

Windsor was now a German Prisoner of War Camp home to some 200+ German POW's. The Army Air Corp was training pilots at the air base located at what is today the Sonoma County Airport.

In December of 1944 a P-38 aircraft from the Santa Rosa air field crashed in the Caster farm and destroyed a number of Prune trees in their orchard.



Receipt from Cabin #23 at Camp Windsor, 70 cents per week

After an interesting exchange of letters the government agreed to pay the Caster family a modest amount of money for the damages. The Caster farm was within shouting distance of Camp Windsor and at the time of the crash is must have sent a chill through every one of the soldiers both American and German as the plane streaked low along the field just to the east of the camp before slamming into the orchard. We have no record of a fatality along Windsor River Road and assume the pilot survived

Continue on page 5

the crash. Drew Caster remembers a family story that a neighbor pulled the injured pilot from the wreckage and extinguished the fire. The Caster family kept a piece of melted aluminum from the plane as a reminder of the crash.

The Caster's made lifelong friends through Camp Windsor including Bud & Eda Smith, Roy & Lottie Starkey, Esther and Jesse Martin and Pearl McDougal. Bud worked at the camp and lived on Starr Road. Pearl McDougal was the Camp nurse and lived at the camp as did Roy & Lottie Starkey, Roy was the Camp foreman. Irene and Virgil worked at many of the local ranches including the Wohler Ranch and the Calhoun Ranch.

Virgil & Irene spent the rest of their lives between Windsor and Vallejo, Irene passed away in 1962 and Virgil in 1976. The Mc Dougals and the Starkeys moved away from Windsor. Bud & Eda moved from Starr Road to Herb Road and operated a chicken ranch. Bud passed away in 1956 and Eda had moved by 1967. A number of families that stayed in Camp Windsor remained in Windsor and Sonoma County and raised their families here.

The farm in Windsor remained as their security for the rest of their lives and is still owned by the Caster family. Drew Caster and his wife Patricia maintain a similar schedule alternating between Vallejo and Windsor.



Virgil and Irene Caster



This photo shows the POW Camp with the open field that is today Deer Creek. The P-38 crashed into the Caster Orchard about where the white rectangle is in the upper right hand corner.

Camp Windsor timeline

Located on the north side of Windsor River Road just before the intersection of Eastside Road

- 1936 Sonoma County learns that a migrant labor camp has been proposed. There is major opposition from local agricultural employers.
- 1938 Camp Windsor opens December 7, 1938, built to house 210 families.
- 1940 Camp Windsor closes. WWII reduces the number of migrant workers needing housing.
- 1942 Camp Windsor is requested for use as a temporary holding facility for Japanese persons in process of being removed to internment camps. Request denied - location deemed "unsuitable".
- 1944 Camp Windsor opens as a branch facility of Camp Beale near Marysville for housing German Prisoners of War.
- 1944 September, two German escapees from Camp Windsor are re-captured and sent back to Camp Beale.
- 1946 Last German POW's leave Camp Windsor and the camp is closed.
- 1949 After operating on and off as a camp for temporary agricultural workers the camp site is sold as government surplus and purchased by the Hogan family

Migratory Labor Camp Quilt of 1940



Complete list of names
of the Camp Quilt

The dedication is

**“To Mrs. Jones, In
Dedication to her Loyalty,
and Patient Devotion to
our Children. Windsor
Migratory Camp. May
1940”**

Elva Brady, Alice Carlson,
Cicel Carlson, Dorothy
Carlson, Dorothy Carlson,
Mrs. Carlson, Irene Caster
Leland Caster, Virgil A. Caster,
Mrs. Virgil Combest, Grace
Costner, Anna Craig, Bob
Halbrook, Lola Halbrook,
Janet Mae Henry, Leon Henry,
Mae Henry, Marcielle Henry,
Merle Henry, Ruth Henry,
Bonnie Holt, Leona Howell,
Edna Inman, Nora Johnson,
Blondel Lowrey, Geraldine
Maples, Pearl Maples, Mrs.
Jess Martin, Virginia Martin,
Clara Matthews, Pearl
McDougle, Estella Pate,
Bessie Shelton, Billy Smith,
Bud Smith, Eda Smith, Joanne
Smith, Truman Smith, Nellie
Tally, Dave Trumbly, Nita
Trumbly, Dessie Vanderburg,
Nadine Wells, Betty J.
Willborn, Sarah Willborn.



Mrs. Alvie Makee Jones

Far left- The Caster family square on the
Camp Quilt

A very special
Thank You
to all of our generous Polenta Dinner donors!
We would never be able to do it without you

Amapola Creek Winery	Steve & Linda Galletti	Jack & Stacey Orme
Wynn & Heide Bailey	Garrett's Ace Hardware	Papapietro Perry Winery
Darrell & Laurie Bertacco	Gabriella Gazzano & John Lehmann	Pedroncelli Winery
Bear Republic Brewing	Wayne & "D" Graner	Peterson Winery
Jim & Wanda Botsch	Carole Haskins	Ann Pitts
Lin Branscomb	Edna Honsa	The Press Democrat
Frances Brooks	Dave & Joanne Hutchins	Raley's
Café Noto	Jackson Family Wines	Ribich Family
Tim & Michelle Cambra	Korbel Champagne Cellars	Rodney Strong Vineyards
Steve & Glenda Castelli	Lagunitas Brewing Co.	Safeway
Charles M. Schulz Museum	Steve & Jan Lehmann	Julie Sanderson
Charlie's Restaurant at the Windsor Golf Club	Lupe's Diner	San Jose Sharks
Christopher Creek Winery	Don & Barbara Madson	See's Candy
Clos du Bois	Betsy Mallace	James Selby of Selby Scrap Metal Design
Coldstone Creamery	Mary's Pizza Shack	Sonoma Cutrer
Costeaux French Bakery	Vonnie Mathews	Starbuck's on Airport
Ken & Marilou Del Greco	Mark & Ann Thomas Mispagel	Bill & Cheryl Strong
Exchange Bank	Mara Murphy	Betty Stubbs
Jim & Sue Finan	Oakland A's	Dave & Millie Turnes
Dominic Foppoli	Oliver's Market	Walt Disney Family Museum
Debora Fudge	Omelette Express	Kathy Woodville

**and especially to the
Town of Windsor**

Polenta 2019



It was a full house



Smiles all around



Polenta Dinner



Windsor Newsmakers from the Past

Feb. 10, 1938
Healdsburg Tribune

Opposition to Migrant Camp In County Fails

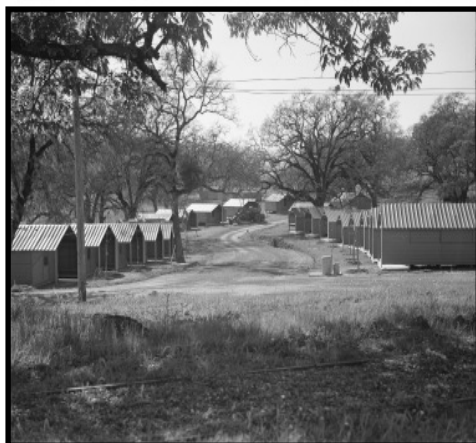
Announcement of payment of \$8,371.09 to Mr. and Mrs. William H. Calhoun of Windsor, by farm security administration for the site of a camp for migratory workers came after a meeting Monday of the county directors of the Associated Farmers, who have been leading the opposition to the establishment of such a camp in this county.

Harold Phillips, president, said that as directors would not meet until March, and that with the purchase of the land, nothing in sight could be done now to prevent the camp, the directors would concentrate on agitating for local for the local camp.

"This, I understand, is the rule at Marysville, where a similar camp has been established, Phillips" said. While my opinion may not represent the other directors, I think we agree on the idea of working toward the proper set-up for local camp.

The northcoast council of the chamber of commerce, the Santa Rosa labor council, the mayor of Santa Rosa, the Grange and the Farm Bureau in the county have all gone on record as opposing the camp. At a recent hearing Russel Garst, national director for the

farm security administration, stated that the camp would be put through, nevertheless.



March 14, 1938
Healdsburg Tribune

Grading for Unwanted Labor Camp is Begun

SAN FRANCISCO—Preliminary work in the construction of a migratory labor camp in Sonoma county near Windsor was scheduled to start today, H. P. Hallsteen, sector engineer of the construction division of farm security administration, announced.

The preliminary work will consist of grading the 66-acre tract and the boring of a well. The camp when completed will provide for 225 families of agricultural workers.

Migratory labor camps have been established by the farm security administration at Brawley, Imperial county; Indio, Riverside county; Arvin and Shafter, Kern county; Marysville, Yuba county; Winters, Yolo county, and Gridley, Butte county. The completed camps provide modern sanitary facilities with hot and cold water, tent platforms, community centers and small hospital clinics.

Sept. 9, 1940
Healdsburg Tribune

Government Sells Windsor Property

The migratory labor camp at Windsor has been purchased by the Veterans Surplus Stores, Inc., the U.S. government, former owners of the 66-acre tract, announced late last week.

The site, used during the war as a prisoner-of-war camp, was sold by bid at an undisclosed price.

Ralph Hogan, of Ukiah, president of the purchasing firm, plans to build his home on the tract, and the remainder of the property will be divided into home sites.

Located west of Windsor near Russian River, the tract has a complete water system, sewage disposal unit, paved streets and several buildings. It was declared surplus by the government several months ago.



The "Isolation Building" at Camp Windsor 1939 The water tower in the background is where the photo on page 5 was take. If you were thought to be contagious you stayed in the small building

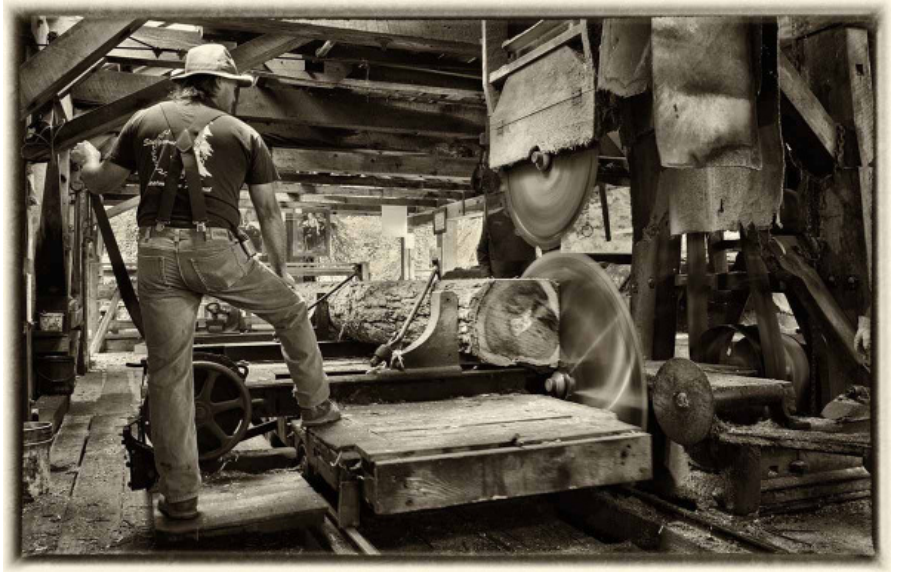
Windsor Museum & Historical Society Announcements

Museum Hours

The Hembree House Museum is open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday (except holidays) from 9:30 to 4:40. It's a great way to experience Windsor's past.

Hembree House Museum
9225 Foxwood Dr.
Windsor, California
707-838-4563

P. S. Museum Receptionists Are Needed. To volunteer, call Jan Lehmann, 838-4563. It's fun, easy and rewarding!



We recommend a visit to **Sturgeon's Mill**, one of the only steam powered sawmills in the United States. Our Museum had some of the Cypress logs from the historic driveway milled there. Visit <http://www.sturgeonsmill.com/> for more information.

The working museum will conduct four weekend demonstration runs during the 2019 year. These free public demonstration runs are held on the Saturdays and Sundays from 10am-3pm on these scheduled dates:

MAY 4-5TH
 JUNE 15-16TH
 SEPTEMBER 14-15TH
 OCTOBER 12-13TH



We Invite You to Join Us

Windsor Museum & Historical Society • P.O. Box 1544, Windsor, CA 95492
Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Type of Membership _____

Please select from the following list of memberships:

- Life Member \$300.00
- Family Membership \$ 25.00
- Family of Seniors (60+) \$ 20.00
- Individual \$ 20.00
- Individual Senior (60+) \$ 15.00



Hembree House Museum

Area of Interest

- Museum Receptionist _____
- Research _____
- Publicity _____
- Garden Club _____
- Grant Writing _____
- Board Member _____
- Newsletter Articles _____
- Fundraising _____
- Other _____

In this issue

Stories from Camp Windsor

Migratory Labor Camp 1938-1944

SCHEDULE B			
DATE	PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT
8-6	Northwestern Pac. R.R.	Ship Play. Equip. Indio	1. 83
8-12	Wing Fong and Co. (S.F.)	Reed for Baskets	3. 24
8-14	Ra yburn's Groc-Windsor	Punch material	1. 62
8-14	Woolworth Co. Santa Rosa	Paper cups	1. 24
8-26	Bing's Garage-Windsor	Welding washing Mach.	. 25

FORM 1X RP 203
7-22-39

CHECK DISBURSEMENTS

SCHEDULE A

DATE	CHECK NO.	PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT
8-6	97	Brown, David O.	Camp Fund Loan	1. 50
8-6	98	Petty Cash Fund	- - -	10. 00
8-10	99	Pisano, Ben	Camp Fund Loan	1. 00
8-14	100	Vic's Sport Shop	Athletic Equip.	6. 80
8-14	101	Gaddis, Lee A.	Camp Fund Loan	2. 00
8-14	102	Burlington Bakery	Doughnuts	5. 90
8-21		Bank of America		
		Monthly service charge	average bal. less than \$100.00	.94

Above are some receipts from Camp Windsor 1939. Look what Bing's Garage charged

Oct./Nov./Dec. 2018 For Your Reading Pleasure

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Hembree House Museum

Windsor Museum & Historical Society
P.O. Box 1544
Windsor, CA 95492

*Check out WM&HS's website —
www.windsorhistory.org — and
"Like Us" on Facebook*

Mark your Calendars
Annual Membership Meeting
Wednesday, June 19,
Potluck 6:00 - 8:00

